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To: Board Members Date: May 9, 2024

From: Steve Sodergren

Executive Officer

Subject: Acceptance of Association of Marital and Family Therapist

Regulatory Board National Examination Presentation

At its May 2024 meeting, the Board discussed the potential adoption of the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Board (AMFTRB) National Exam. Staff were directed to complete several key steps before requesting final Board approval to implement regulatory or legislative amendments that would formally accept the AMFTRB National Exam for licensure. Currently, Board staff are drafting legislative and regulatory proposals that will be necessary to accept the exam. Concurrently, Board staff have been in discussions with AMFTRB administrators concerning the AMFTRB National Exam content and the examination accessibility for candidates.

AMFTRB National Exam Content

AMFTRB is preparing for a job task analysis to begin this year. The last job analysis for the AMFTRB National Exam was completed in 2021. The initial phase of the analysis is a survey that is distributes to all practitioners. This survey will collect data on tasks, knowledge, and skills that practitioners use in their daily work. The responses help to identify essential competencies that the exam should measure. This survey data will assist in outlining the major content areas to be tested and the weighting of each area, ensuring that the exam accurately reflects current practice. This this survey will be used to in the item writing and review for exams administered beginning in 2026.

California has the largest population of licensed marriage and family therapists in the nation, so their participation would help ensure that the job analysis reflects the realities of a large and diverse practitioner population. This would enhance the validity of the exam, making it a better measure of the skills and knowledge necessary for safe and effective practice in the state. In all the job task analysis that AMFTRB has conducted since 1988, California LMFTs have participated in the panels and committees working on the development of the job task analysis, as well as responding to the survey. AMFTRB acknowledged the practice trends nationally were more in line with the common practices in California and they expect that this will influence a change in examination content and measurement scope for examinations beginning in 2026.

Currently, the Department of Consumers Affairs (DCA) Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES) develops and maintains the question item bank for the Board's LMFT Written Clinical Exam If the Board accepts the AMFTRB National Exam for licensure, the Board will be able to share its question bank with AMFTRB. This will assist AMFTRB in addressing content concerns, it will also increase AMFTRB's ability to offer increased testing frequencies. AMFTRB has expressed interest in obtaining the LMFT Written Clinical item bank if the Board accepts the exam. Staff have also consulted with OPES to discuss how this implementation could be carried out.

Board staff will be working with AFMTRB to promote the job task analysis and encourage California practitioners to participate in the development of the AMFTRB National Exam.

AMFTRB National Exam Accessibility

AMFTRB Contracts with Prometric, and international test administrator, to administer the AMFTRB National Exam. Prometric is a partner of PTC and has extensive test administration experience. The AMFTRB National Exam is administered 1 week each month. Prometric has 470 authorized testing centers worldwide that administer the AMFTRB National Exam, 17 of which are in California. Currently, the LMFT Written Clinical Examination is currently administered through Pearson VUE, which maintains 1,800 authorized test centers worldwide, 1,794 nationwide, and 109 in California.

Through staff conversations with AMFTRB, it is apparent that they are proactively assessing how to manage a potential increase in exam candidates should the Board adopt the AMFTRB National Exam. AMFTRB has recognized the differences in testing administrations and has already begun evaluating the possibility of offering the exam on a more frequent basis, potentially more than once a month or even continuously. Additionally, AMFTRB has indicated that it will be initiating discussions with Prometric to explore the possible expansion of candidate capacity.

Lois Paff Bergen, PhD, LMFT, the Executive Director of AMFTRB, will be in attendance to answer questions from the Board and stakeholders.